

NAME: Takeshita, Shizuma DATE OF BIRTH: 9/10/1880 PLACE OF BIRTH: Nagasaki
Age: 93 Sex: M Marital Status: M Education: 8th Grade (?)

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1902 Age: 22 M.S. S Port of entry: San Fran.

*Occupation/s: 1. Newspaper writer 2. In charge of Newspaper office 3. Printing Bus

Place of residence: 1. Oakland, Ca. 2. _____ 3. _____

Religious affiliation: Christian Church

Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:

* 4. Insurance Agent

Name of assembly center: Tanforan Assembly Center

Name of relocation center: Topaz, Utah & Tule Lake, Ca. & Jerome, Ark. & Heart

Dispensation of property: _____ Names of bank/s: Mountain,

Jobs held in camp: 1. _____ 2. _____

Jobs held outside of camp: _____

Left camp to go to: Cleveland, Ohio (January 1945)

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: March 1945 (Oakland)

Address/es: 1. Oakland, California 2. _____

3. _____
Religious affiliation: Christian Church

Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: Deceased

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 3/10/74 Place: Oakland, Ca.

Translator *Musakane*

Name: (MR.) SHIZUMA TAKESHITA

Age: 93 years old

Birthdate: September 10, 1880

Place of Birth: Nagasaki Prefecture, Ikigun

Year came to the U.S.: 1902

At what age did you come to the U.S.: 22

Major Occupation: Insurance salesman and a little domestic
work

Wife's Occupation: Domestic worker

Relocation Camp: Tanforan Assembly Center, Topaz, Utah,
Tule Lake, Jerome and then Heart Mountain

Interview Date: March 10, 1974

Interviewer: Reverend Heihachiro Takarabe

Translator: Mrs. Akamatsu

Translated Date:

NAME: MR. SHIZUMA TAKESHITA

AGE: 94 years of age

BIRTHDATE: SEPTEMBER 10, YEAR OF MEIJI 13 (1880)

BIRTH PLACE: NAGASAKI PREFECTURE, IKIGUN

YEAR AND AGE WHEN CAME TO U.S.: 1902, 22 years of age

MAJOR OCCUPATION: NEWSPAPER/INSURANCE/DOMESTIC

RELOCATION CAMP: TOPAZ, TULE LAKE, JEROME, HEART
MOUNTAIN

INTERVIEWED DATE: March 10, 1974

INTERVIEWER: HEIHACHIRO TAKARABE

TRANSLATOR: MRS. AKAMATSU

NAME: MR. SHIZUMA TAKESHITA

Mr. Takeshita: (Mr. Takeshita is showing Reverend Takarabe some of his collections of historical pictures and souvenirs.) These are some things I collected from the time I came to America. I came over here from Japan in the year of 1902. In 1904, I started to work for the "Nichibei News" (forerunner of the present "Nichibei Times") and I started the Oakland branch. This is the picture of Dr. Maeda, editor of the paper. This is the picture of the first Christian Church that I attended and this is the record that I was baptized in 1903. The record of the church from 1890 are in this book. Many members are now deceased and many have gone back to Japan. The church copied this and made a new record book so I'm keeping this as a souvenir for myself. This is the picture of the dormitory I stayed in. We called it "The Mission", then. (The Christian outreach post)

Reverend Takarabe: May I borrow these? I will make a copy and return the originals back to you.

Mr. Takeshita: Yes, you may. After the earthquake in San Francisco in 1906, many refugees from San Francisco came to Oakland. We housed these people at the place where we were having church gatherings so we had to rent this other place for our church. Those days the Japanese were

mostly school boys and did not have money. We took a book like this and went around asking contributions for the church. It was written like this in old "Meiji Japanese". We didn't have a minister then. The superintendent and the secretary made the foundation of the West 10th Street Methodist Church (Japanese Church). Reverend Saburo Imai came a little later. He worked hard and gained many new members. The church building became too small so we remodeled the building in 1938 which looked like this picture. We named it the West 10th Street Methodist Church. This is the picture of the 50th anniversary of the church. This is about myself.

Q: Will you read that for me?

A: It is quite long. My name is Shizuma Takeshita and I was born in "Meiji 13" -- it is in 1880 and on September 10th in Nagasaki Prefecture, Ikigun, a small island. My father died when I was 13 years old and being the eldest son, I had to take over my father's estate. My family was a descendant of an old "Shizoku" family (Samurai clan) and follower of Lord Matsuura. I became the head of the household and unable to leave. At that time, there was no educational institute higher than 8th grade elementary school on my island and there was no way for me to receive higher education there. When I was 17 years old, I sneaked out from home without telling my mother or grandmother and went to Nagasaki City -- went to work in a lawyer's office and studied law.

In those days, if doctors or lawyers passed an examination, they were able to get a license to practice. (There was only one university in Tokyo at the time.) I worked in the law office of Mr. Kishihara to learn law and become a lawyer. Mr. Kishihara was very good to me. I went to courts with him, heard arguments on cases, took notes and helped him. One day, he told me that he thought I was ready to become his successor and told me to apply for an examination. About that time, requirements changed and an university degree became necessary. I was so disappointed I felt like committing suicide. Mr. Kishihara sympathized with me and said he had a friend in America. He suggested that I come to America, study English and then go back to Japan and start a business or something. He gave me 300 yen. 300 yen in those days were equivalent to 300,000 yen now. I took the lowest class fare on the ship and came to America.

Q: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

A: I had two sisters and I was the only son. I was not allowed to leave -- that's why I sneaked out from home. I was over 21 years old when I decided to come to America, therefore, I had no difficulty in obtaining a passport.

Q: What year was this?

A: It was 1902. The Japanese Consul in San Francisco was Mr. Uyeno from Kumamoto and his wife was a daughter of the largest hotel in Kumamoto. Her father wrote a letter of introduction for me to bring to Mr. Uyeno. When I arrived in San Francisco, I went to see him but he was

leaving for Sacramento and did not have time to see me. I thought he was avoiding me and I was very upset. In those days, there were no automobiles and Mr. Uyeno had to go to the station by horse and buggy, and catch a train to Sacramento but I did not know that at the time. I left my gift there, came back to the hotel and told this to Mr. Takeuchi. He was a passenger on the same ship I came on. Mr. Takeuchi said I should not depend on people to help me and he said San Francisco was not a good place for me to stay, (lot of gambling was going on). He brought me Oakland and introduced me to Reverend Chuzo Nakamura who arranged for me to stay at the dormitory at 10 cents a night. Breakfast was doughnuts and coffee for 5 cents and lunch and dinner were 10 cents each. People can't believe it but it was so in those days. I went to work as a school boy and received \$1.25 per week with meals and lodging. There was no adult education school then and persons over 20 years old couldn't enter elementary school. I started to learn English privately but had a difficult time. At that time, a person named Mr. Ryoshi Tsushima who was staying at the church dormitory started to teach me Christianity. He taught me from the Bible and prayed with me. My ancestors were originally "Zenshu Buddhists" but later became "Shintos" during my great-grandfather's time. When I stayed at the dormitory, I had to attend Christian services but I said I was not going to become a Christian. Mr. Tsushima came to my place and fervently tried to

evangelize me. Some nights when he talked to me till late and missed the last street car to go back to his place, he slept with me in my single bed. He taught me how to pray and when I first prayed, he was overwhelmed with happiness. With tears in his eyes, he started to give prayer of thanks to God. I was so inspired by this, when I was asked to come to prayer meetings, I started to go and learned to pray. One year later, on November 11, 1903, I became a member of the church and have been active ever since. I have served under 20 pastors. Many things have happened but I am thankful that I am with the church until this date. Sometimes the church had been political and I didn't like that. We are not perfect and I understand that the church is not perfect. Sometimes, I have not been in agreement with our pastors. Some pastors thought I was the cause of their transfer. And sometimes, members thought I got together with the pastor and made policies for the Church. I went to conference often and sometimes, I was appreciated by the pastor and members. It's about half and half. I believe that I would be permitted to have my funeral here at this church.

When I came into America, I had to pay an entrance tax of \$3.00. About 10 years later, a person (named Teruo Heike?) brought suit against the government and it was found illegal. Thereafter, immigrants entering this country did not have to pay the entrance tax nor the fee of about \$2.00 per year that we aliens were paying to

stay in this country. In 1904, I was writing articles in the Nichi-Bei News" trying to caution young Japanese men who were in this country and living an immoral life. Thus I got to know the editor, Mr. Abiko and was asked to open a branch office in Oakland. This was in 1904. After I was in charge of this office for about 10 years I decided to visit my mother and grandmother in Japan as I came to America without telling them.

Q: Did you correspond with them during this time?

A: Yes, I did. I saved the money I earned as a school boy and whenever I accumulated \$5.00, I took it to a Japanese bank and sent it to them. In my first letter, I mentioned that I was well and I knew I had the responsibility of looking after the Takeshita family and sent the first \$5.00 I earned. Thereafter, I kept sending them money. When I started to work for the newspaper, I didn't know enough English to translate important news from the English newspaper for the Japanese paper but something miraculous happened in 1905. A Japanese lady who studied English under a missionary in Japan and who had taught English two years in a high school in Japan came to the United States as a bride but her husband-to-be was already living with someone else and they already had a child. She could not marry him so she came to stay with her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Uyeyama where I had my office for the newspaper and also the office for the Japanese Association. Mr. and Mrs. Uyeyama thought she was the right person for me and suggested that I marry her. If she didn't get married,

she would have been deported as her passport was issued to her as entering this country to be a bride. We got married -- her name was Chiyono and she was a year older than I. She knew both English and Japanese well and was a great help to me in carrying out my duty as a correspondent for the newspaper. The main office was very happy about our work. We had no children. In those days most of the Japanese brides who came from Japan couldn't speak English. Whenever they had to go to a doctor or needed help, my wife was their interpreter. She did great service to the community. She taught Sunday School at the church, she was a soloist often and was active in the women's society. We both served the church very actively.

In 1905, the "Nichi Bei News" made a directory of all Japanese and this is a copy (he shows). Those days, most of the Japanese didn't understand English and most of them had very little education and knew very little of the Japanese Constitution and had no knowledge of the U.S. Constitution. We made something like this (shows). We translated the United States Constitution into Japanese language for the benefit of Japanese immigrants. I loaned this to the "University of Southern California Issei History Project" several years ago. Mr. Shosui Maeda who had a degree in law was instrumental in writing this.

Q: When did you make this?

A: In 1905. Both the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution

of Japan are in this. At this time, I suggested that we make a directory of all Japanese living in the area as a supplement. This is the origin of the directories the two San Francisco Japanese Newspaper staff put out bi-annually. Now we have many names but in those days the directory was very thin. This is the one I edited. I did some research and wrote an article about the Japanese in nursery business. Now we have many Japanese flower growers but we only had a few then and Mr. Domoto was the largest operator. And then I made a research of the Japanese population in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. I traveled by bicycle and got this information. There was a total of 2546 Japanese, 2298 were men and only 148 were women and children. I got these advertisements printed in the book from business men which paid for the cost of publishing the directory.

Q: May I borrow these books for a while?

A: Yes, if you will return them to me. In 1905, we also organized the Oakland Japanese Association. We had officers but no funds so we used my newspaper office as the headquarters for this organization. I had rented this room from Mr. and Mrs. Uyeyama at \$6.00 per month and I also slept there, until I got married.

Q: What did you do after you got married?

A: After I got married, I rented a house and my newspaper office moved there, too. There were only two of us as we had no children. We lived on the first floor and rented out the second floor rooms. The Japanese Association

rented another place and was pretty well organized by then. At the time of the earthquake in San Francisco in 1906, the Japanese Association and the church helped refugees. Because so many came from San Francisco, we rented a larger house so we could take in some of them. Also, there was a large storage area for buggies behind the house. We converted that into a temporary newspaper plant and published our paper for about a year until we were able to set up a new plant in San Francisco with new equipment, printing types and everything. I got the old equipment, types and etcs., and started my own business the "Pacific Printing Co." I operated this for about 5 years and sold it to the plant manager because I was busy with church work, newspaper branch work and etcs.

Also, something else came up. There were two Japanese operated banks at that time. One a regular bank and the other was a Savings and Loan Assn. The two banks were having financial difficulty and I was instrumental in the merger of the two banks. However, later on the bank closed. The Japanese bank started out with the same amount of assets as the Bank of Italy and it went broke but the Bank of Italy made a success and it was the forerunner of the present Bank of America. There were so many problems around that time. It is a miracle that I am alive today.

Q: Why do you say that?

A: Those days, there were many gamblers and hoodlums. They went around and caused lot of trouble such as going into

an eating place and stir up fights. I reported some incidents and got some of those troublemakers arrested. Therefore, my life was threatened. There were place of prostitutes and I criticized this in the newspaper. They brought the newspaper to me and tried to make me promise that I would not write about them anymore. I told them I would if they would promise not to operate such business. They stuck a pistol on me. I said to them at the time, "Go ahead and kill me if you think you can continue your business by killing me." I said I can't win by fighting with you -- you can kill my body but you can't kill righteousness because I believe in God. This person left saying, "Please don't make it too harsh." I didn't get killed but there were incidents like this. Risking my life I wrote articles in the newspaper trying to evangelize those young Japanese. One the corner of 8th and Franklin Streets in Oakland, there was a Chinese gambling joint. I went there every Sunday evening for 2 years, stood on the sidewalks and talked about the Christian gospel. By this experience, I am able to give Christian testimonies today. I don't know how many people were saved -- only God knows. Later on, no Japanese came to that corner. Listeners were Chinese and Caucasians so I quit going there. My wife was a great help and Mr. Kajiwara who is still living here also helped me. Fire broke out during the San Francisco earthquake and the town burned for 2 nights and 3 days. It was on a Wednesday

night and we were having our prayer meeting at the church. Mr. Abiko, our newspaper editor stopped by on his way back from Sacramento. He, my wife and I walked to the ferry and got on a ferry boat to San Francisco. The newspaper plant wasn't on fire as yet and Mr. Abiko wanted to get the Japanese types out so he went to get a buggy to haul them. My wife and I put all the types we could in a sack and dragged them out to the sidewalk. When Mr. Abiko came back, he and I went down in the basement again trying to get more out but the military police came and told us he would shoot us if we did not leave. Leaving all the types behind, my wife and I started back to Oakland. By that time it was in the morning. There were many workers from the San Francisco plant already at my place and in the park across the street. My wife and I had only a few dishes, no large pots and pans and an one burner gas stove without an oven. We didn't know how to cook for so many people. I washed a bucket, cooked rice in it and served rice and Japanese pickles and whatever we had. At night, we slept like sardines in a can. Our pastor was Reverend Eiken Aibara at the time. He got together with the other churches (he was the chairman) and began aiding the refugees with articles that were donated. The landlord of the house we used as our church made us vacate the place because the building would get damaged with so many people going in and out. It was very difficult at the time but we bought a house at \$9,000. Before the

earthquake, the property was valued at about \$3,000.

We bought other items and spent about \$10,000 in total.

The Board Of Missions gave us a grant of \$5,000 but it was very difficult to raise the other \$5,000 because the men were mostly students. I was working for the newspaper but we had only 37 subscribers and they were paying only 50 cents a month. Later, subscriptions went up to 75 cents and to \$1.00 per month.

It was hard to gather donations. Reverend Suenoshin Kawashima traveled as far as Los Angeles asking for donations. You can see in this list here --contributions were mostly \$2.00 and \$3.00 -- \$5.00 was the most a person gave.

Q: What was the value of one dollar in those days?

A: We were able to eat 10 meals at 10 cents each. In another word, if we had one dollar, we were able to eat 3 days. We traveled all over California to raise \$5,000. In 1909, when Reverend Kawashima was here we had quite a large membership. We opened a meeting place in Berkeley, too. This is the program of the opening service. It was at the home of Jikei Suito.

Q: May I borrow this program so I can make a Xerox copy?

A: Yes, you may. (This is the beginning of the present Berkeley United Methodist Church.) We started the Methodist Group and a little later a Christian Church was organized there. These two churches merged later and became the Berkeley United Methodist Church and the name of the Christian Church faded out. By the way, this is

my opinion. Merger of churches sound good but it isn't a good thing to do. In Oakland, we had two Japanese churches, the Methodist Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South. When the Methodist north and south churches merged in America, we had to merge, too. The Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church is no longer here. I think we could spread the gospel more widely if we had the two churches.

Mr. Takeuchi, whom you met this morning came from the Methodist Episcopal Church. His children are the leaders of our church now. We have been blessed because of this family.

I understand it is 6 years since you started your ministry. You will probably run into many problems but I plead with you -- even if you get depressed sometimes, please carry on and do not quit your ministry. Our church was very large -- we built an education building with a loan from the Board and this is the order of the service when we burned the mortgage papers. Our church was receiving aid from the Board of Missions for a long time. We are self supporting now and paying about \$5,000 a year towards apportionments. Our church building was sold to the City because of redevelopment some years ago. We still have about \$120,000 from the sale in the Sumitomo Bank. We were asked to come and use the Lake Park Church because their membership was getting smaller and they were having financial difficulty. By paying \$200 per month rent, we came with the understanding that

we would use the place until we found a suitable place to build. We were looking around but it was hard to find a suitable location. Later, Lake Park Church asked our Japanese Church to merge with them. We started to have potluck dinners together. The Caucasian members (many are from Northern Europe) liked our food. We became very friendly with each other. We decided to have church conferences and vote on the merger. A majority of our members and the Caucasian church members voted for the merger. Thus we merged and had some problems on the arrangement of the worship service. The Superintendent and the Bishop were both concerned about this. The last couple years, Reverend George Uyemura alone was appointed to minister to both the Japanese and Caucasians. I think it is working out well. The Japanese speaking group wanted a complete service in Japanese but we realize now that we were wrong. The Buena Vista United Methodist Church members realized this much sooner and they have a good group of second and third generation Japanese attending. In our church, we don't have many second and third generation because we the older members stressed the importance of the language group for so long and didn't put much effort in the younger generation. From now on, I would like to see our funerals held in the church with service in English for our younger generation. I am glad that I realized this while I am living. I think the reason that most funerals are being held now at the mortuary is because

we were having funeral services at the church in Japanese. I have already requested that my funeral be held at the church.

This story goes back again. When there was an epidemic of "Spanish Flu", we used the church as a temporary hospital. We had 53 patients. My wife and I and few others took care of the patients. Doctors got sick, too. I got my insurance doctor to examine patients. We saved 50 persons.

Q: When was this?

A: It was in 1919. Our church did such service, too. The cost to build our new education building was \$35,000. The upperstairs was a gym and social hall for 500 people. First floor was Sunday School classrooms. We all worked hard to build this. We had a mortgage and was paid it up.

Q: Let's start again from about the year 1914.

A: In 1914, I quit working for the newspaper and visited Japan. My mother didn't want to part with me so I brought her with me to America for a visit. In 1915, the World's Fair was held here. She stayed here 8 months, saw the fair and returned to Japan.

In 1917, New York Life Ins. Co. started a branch office in Oakland. They came to the church to find a Japanese who would become an agent for them and I decided to take it. (I still have a license but I don't do business anymore.) If an agent works 20 years, he can receive pension for the rest of his life. I started to receive

pension in 1937 and received it during the war while I was in the Relocation Center, too. I did a little business (insurance) after WWII. It wasn't too good because the Japanese scattered after the war and the Japanese population here is less than before the war. I went to five different evacuation centers during the war. First in Tanforan Assembly Center here then to Topaz WRA Center in Utah, next to Tule Lake WRA Center in Northern California, then to Jerome WRA Center in Arkansas and lastly to Heart Mountain WRA Center in Wyoming. Many of our friends relocated to the eastern cities like Chicago and Cleveland. At government expense, we went to Cleveland, too. My wife and I both worked one month for a Caucasian family and made enough money to pay our transportation back to Oakland.

Q: Please tell me something that happened around 1924 or 1925.

A: In 1924, my first wife and I visited Japan and came back. In 1925, Dr. Sato came from Japan to do evangelistic work among Japanese. I drove a car and took him to many homes. In Watsonville, Mrs. Sakata had a nervous breakdown and was ill. After Dr. Sato prayed for her, she got well just like a miracle. She is still living.

Q: When you went to Japan in 1914, did you take your wife?

A: No, I went by myself and brought my mother back with me. She returned to Japan after staying here 8 months. In 1924, my first wife and I went together. We visited her sister and we went to my home town on a little island. People there were happy to see us back from America. I

gave talks at the Community Center and at schools.

After I came back to America, Dr. Sato came to America on a Evangelistic Mission. Many in our church accepted Christ and received baptism at that time.

In 1934, my first wife died from a heart attack. I was a widower for 2 years but it was difficult to be in insurance business without a helper. My friends, Mrs. Uyeyama and Mrs. Fujii recommended a person to me. This lady had sons. The second one was in Oakland and my first wife looked after him because his mother was doing domestic work for a family and couldn't be with him. She also invited the boy's mother many times as she was trying to lead her to become a Christian and we were pretty well acquainted with each other. When the marriage matter with this person came up, I asked the son's feeling about it. He had no objections so we got married.

Q: How old was the son then?

A: I think he was 19 or 20. This son got married a little later. Then we brought her third son to this country. Around that time, when a youth reached 18 years in Japan, he has to serve in the army and could not receive a passport to come to a foreign country. They had to come abroad before they reached 18 years old. The eldest son was already graduated from a trade school and was employed by a manufacturer and was over 21 years old. We were not able to bring him to this country. Meanwhile, the WWII started, he was taken in the Japanese Army and

sent to Manchuria. We were evacuated to Relocation Centers in America a little later. When the war broke out, the Oakland Correspondent for "Nichi Bei Times"; Mr. Ikeda was taken in by the FBI for investigation. Mrs. Abiko and her son were operating the newspaper at that time. I was asked to take care of the Oakland Branch again and did so until the newspaper plant had to close because of the evacuation.

The Western Defense announced two zones. The Japanese and Japanese-Americans who lived in Zone #1, west of highway 99 had to evacuate first. It was thought at the time, that Japanese in Zone #2 may not have to evacuate. We sent our children and grandchild to a place near Marysville, California. We were planning to join them later but evacuation order came to Zone #2 also. Our son's family had to go to Tule Lake WRA Center and we were evacuated to Tanforan Assembly Center. My wife and I tried to join our sons at Tule Lake but before procedures were complete, we had to move to Topaz WRA center. From there we moved to Tule Lake WRA Center in 1943. Then later on, Tule Lake was designated as a segregated center -- the center for evacuees who pledged their loyalty to Japan. There were many who signed "No" to the loyalty questionnaire (not loyal to the U.S.) in the blocks 41 and 42 where our 2 sons were housed. They also signed "no". My wife and I were housed in Block 49 -- we signed "Yes". Our second son who was a mess hall manager was arrested and jailed in Klamath Falls

because he was thought to be an agitator. I went to the main office and made a complaint. I asked them to show me the warrant and I asked them to have a hearing for him. The hearing date was set and they asked if I wanted an attorney. I told them that I was his step-father and I would act as his attorney. The hearing date was postponed and before another date was set, they informed us that there would be no hearing. Instead, they were sending our second son to a place where they kept men who refused to go into service -- somewhere in Utah. Meanwhile, Tule Lake Center was designated as the center for disloyals. Our third son was even stronger than our second son because he also was educated in Japan before he came to this country. He got married in Tule Lake and his wife's parents also signed "No" so they had to stay in Tule Lake Center. My wife and I had to take our second son's wife and child and move to another center. Meanwhile, I started to write letters in my broken English to the officer where our second son was held and tried to have him persuade our son to change his loyalty to "Yes". I found that God did not forsake me. The officer was a Christian and a Methodist. He was able to persuade my son to change his mind. He made arrangements for our son to go to Jerome WRA Center in Arkansas and we joined him there. This was in November 1943.

Many things happened in our block 49 at Tule Lake before we left there. Our block manager signed "Yes" on the

loyalty question and he moved out that night. There were confusions in our block -- many meetings were held regarding the "Yes" and "No" answer that we had to answer on the loyalty questionnaire. Many residents were originally from Tacoma, Washington area. I stood up at one of the meetings and asked if I could express my opinion. I pleaded to them not to fight with each other whether they signed "Yes" or "No" like they were doing in other blocks. I told them I felt that those who have their father detained in an internment camp should answer "Yes" if they wanted their father out of there and those who do not want to move out of Tule Lake should answer "No". And regardless of what their feelings were, anyone wanting to join their children on the outside should answer "Yes". When the block manager left, they had a meeting and asked me to be their block manager. I told the residents not to get upset at publicities or rumors. There was a Christian minister in the block. I asked him to translate all communications from the WRA office into Japanese so everyone could understand and I told them that any communications from the Japanese evacuees would be translated into English and brought to the WRA center office but do not expect that they can do everything that we ask them to do. I wanted them to give a farewell party at the mess hall whenever someone was leaving and a welcome party when someone moved in. I also said that I was a stranger to them and I did not know their back-

ground and if I became their block manager, I wanted to serve everyone equally. This was received very well by the residents and I served as their block manager until I left Tule Lake Center.

Gradually all the "No" evacuees were transferred into Tule Lake from other centers and most of the "Yes" evacuees in Tule Lake were transferred out to other centers. There were some like myself and hospital staff who signed "yes" still waiting to be transferred out. Rumors started that some of the "No" new comers were going to get together and kill the "Yes" group still there. I went to the office asking them to do something but was told to wait. Meanwhile, curfews within the center went into effect and preparations were being made to get us out. One morning, the office notified all of us "Yes" group to pack and get ready to be picked up. I packed mine and went to my daughter-in-law's quarters and packed her things. Gradually all of us were taken out to the military quarters. That night all of us were put on the train. When we got up in the morning, we were in Portland. From there the train traveled to Minidoka WRA Center in Idaho and unloaded some who were supposed to go there. Next they separated one passenger car with people going to Topaz, Utah WRA Center. Then we went through Denver, Colorado and unloaded some people going to Amache, Colorado WRA Center. The rest of us went to Jerome, Arkansas WRA Center. When I got off, I learned that our passenger car

was hitched on to a freight train. We spent 1943 Christmas and 1944 New Year in Jerome. Then we spent 1944 Christmas and 1945 New Year at Heart Mountain WRA Center.

At the end of January 1945, we received tickets from the WRA and relocated to Cleveland, Ohio and did domestic work for about a month.

Our pastor, Reverend John Yamashita came back to Oakland in February 1945 to open up our church educational building into a hostel to accomodate returnees. At the time of evacuation, about 100 church related families stored belonging in the education building and superintendent Dr. Frank H. Smith watched over the place for us. He advised us to return around February 1945. The Western Defense lifted the ban on Japanese around the end of January or the first of February 1945. My wife and I came back in March and helped Reverend Yamashita. We wanted to rent a house but there were no vacancies at that time. So many black people moved into Oakland during the war to work for Kaiser.

I put an advertisement in the newspaper for a place to rent. I got a call back from someone saying "we don't want you Japs so go somewhere else." I spoke to him in my broken English that we came back at the order of the government. God always helps us in time of need -- we got a call from the parents of the Mayor of Piedmont asking us to come there. We both did domestic jobs for them. I was almost 70 years old and learned to do chores

from my wife. The WWII ended while we were working there. They told us to listen to the Emperor of Japan proclaim defeat. Although we signed our loyalty to the U.S.A., and we knew we must love our enemies but when we heard that the country of our birth was defeated, we cried. We worked for Mr. and Mrs. Dinsmoor for about a year and we liked it because we didn't have to worry about food or a place to live. When the Ogawas who worked for them before the war returned, they asked us to find another place. We worked at several places after that. The last place we worked before we took a trip to Japan was Senator Knowland's father's place. He was the owner of the Oakland Tribune. We worked for him 2 years. Mrs. Knowland suffered a stroke about 3 weeks after we started to work there and she died on the third day of her illness. Senator Knowland came back from Washington, D.C. for the funeral. She was his step mother but he was very attached to her. His real mother passed away when he was still young and his step mother was very good to him. Before the Senator returned to Washington, D.C., he made arrangements to have his eldest daughter and her husband come to live with his father and he asked us to look after his father and daughter. We worked for them 2 years but had to quit working because I started to have heart trouble and was advised by the doctor to rest. My condition improved after I took some rest and we decided to take a trip to Japan to see our eldest son and his family.

When WWII broke out, this son had to serve in the Japanese Army because he was living there. He thought he would not get out of it alive so he sent us a letter with some of his hair for us to keep. I did not show this letter to my wife as it came while she was at work. If and when he died, I was going to show it to her. Later, through the Red Cross and return postcards, we found out that he was safe. After the war ended, we sent many packages to them and to our relatives. We had some savings and when I reached the age of 65, I started to receive Social Security and so did my wife. We took a cargo ship to Japan because we could take more baggage with us. The cargo ship took 12 passengers.

Q: What year was this?

A: It was in 1952. We met our daughter-in-law and two grandchildren for the first time. Our son's family was living in Fukushima-Ken (Prefecture) and he was working for Shoyei Seishi Co. While we were there, my first wife's niece came to see us all the way from Nagano -Ken (Prefecture). (Shinshu is another name) We took a trip to Nagano-Ken and also to my wife's birthplace, Fukuoka -Ken and visited relatives. Then we went to my birthplace Iki-no-shima in Nagasaki-Ken. We also visited friends whom we knew in this country and had moved back to Japan. We spent 7 months in Japan. and returned to this country and started to do domestic work again. The place was three houses from Mr. Knowland's place.

Meanwhile, we tried to get our eldest son to come and live in this country but he had lost his U.S. citizenship when he served in the Japanese army. He could not come as a U.S. citizen so we arranged to have him come on a three months visitor's visa. One the 3rd day after he arrived, he said he didn't want to return to Japan so we decided to find out if he could stay here permanently. I mentioned this to Senator Knowland's daughter. She got in touch with her father and he introduced a bill for our son. The immigration office heard this and they got upset. They wanted to deport him. My wife told them in her broken English that she lost her husband when the boys were very young and she had to take them to Japan because she couldn't support them. She pleaded to the officers that her eldest son had to serve in the Japanese army against his will because he was living in Japan at the time. The officer instructed us to send in affidavits. We hired an attorney and sent in proper documents. At the first hearing, we won but the district attorney wasn't satisfied so he set another hearing and we won this also. Then the district attorney referred the case to Washington, D.C. We asked the Japanese American Citizen's League' attorney to help us and the judgement in Washington, D.C. was advantageous to us. They ruled that our son did not lose his citizenship. Therefore, he was able to remain in this country. It took 3 years to get the case settled. We bought a 3 bedroom house in East Oakland and lived

together. About 3 years later, we made arrangements to have his wife and two sons come and join him. Our grandsons were 9 and 11 years old at the time. Now the older grandson is studying at U.C Berkeley and will be graduating before long. The younger one was student body president at Oakland High School and he received recommendation to the Air Force Academy and he graduated there. He is 2nd Lt. and stationed at Taizan now. Our son's family received baptism at church soon after they arrived. Daughter-in-law went to Adult Education School for 3 years. She passed her citizenship examination in English. Since both parents became citizens, the children become U.S. citizens automatically. We have 6 votes in our family.

Since my wife and I are quite old -- I am over 90 and my wife is over 80 -- we have asked our son's family to live with us. I was the lay leader of our church for a long time. Since I became old, I have asked someone else to take over. My son is the lay leader now and he is trying to learn his job.

Q: What were you doing during the depression?

A: I was an insurance salesman.

Q: Did anything happen around that time?

A: In the Japanese Community, we had a "Mutual Financing Club". Because of the depression some members couldn't pay up their share and we had a terrible time. I took a big loss because I signed security for many and some of these people went away. I couldn't pay for everyone at once

(for those who defaulted their payments). So I asked for extension on some. People criticized me -- they said I lived well and even criticized my being a Christian and not following up on my obligations. Those days most Japanese families didn't have rugs or a piano in their home nor members of the family had a bedroom of their own. I told them I would give up my house, well everything I had except our bed and a few dishes and I would give them all the money I had. There was a vacant space where my printing shop was so I took our bed and dishes and moved in there and sold everything we could. What we couldn't sell, we brought them to the printing shop. I told them I would fulfill my responsibility in 5 years. I think the debt was little over \$4,000. I sold the printing shop to the shop manager at \$3,500. I think I cleared my obligation in 3 years. The person who belittled me for being a Christian operated a laundry and his name was Uyeno. Mr. and Mrs. Okada both Christians worked there and they were tormented all the time. When Dr. Sato came from Japan, there was a home meeting at the Okadas. Mr. Uyeno was baptized by Dr. Sato soon after that and became a member of our church.

Q: What was your thought when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: I couldn't believe it at first. I was shocked.

Q: What was the big incident you mentioned that happened in Tule Lake?

A: That's when the head of the War Relocation Authority -- I forgot his name (Dillon Myer?) -- came to Tule Lake.

Some of those who signed "No" and came from Topaz WRA Center headed a demonstration. They wanted all of us to come out to the firebreak and back up their demands.

Q: You lived a long life of 93 years. What do you wish for the younger generation?

A: First, I would like for them to become Christians. Secondly, not to get involved in Communism and not to riot. I would like for them to take advantage of all the research and studies for civilization but not to deviate from the right direction and to know the right God.

Q: Do you think it is important for them to realize their identity as a Japanese American?

A: Yes, I do. I think they should keep all the good points that we have as Japanese and add the good points that we have here or you could say the other way around.

The Japanese have a history of over 2000 years. The Japanese believe in God (Shintoism). Buddhists in Japan do not have Buddhist weddings like they have here. They have it at Shinto Shrines or have a Shinto priest come to the wedding place. When I was in Japan, we were taught to worship Shintoism while we were alive and Buddhist religion was for after death. We hesitate to go into Buddhist homes to evangelize but we shouldn't have to hesitate to go to anyone. I think the head of the "Seicho-no-ye" because he thinks people wouldn't come to him. That's the way I interpret. I think the Christians now days are weak in evangelism. I would like to see you

young minister go to everyone regardless of their religion. You see all the funeral at the Buddhist Churches. That is their life line so we don't have to say anything about that. Christians should have their funeral services at the church as much as possible instead of at the mortuary. I would like to have you teach Christianity to as many third and fourth generation Japanese as you can. If I was as young as you are, I would go back to Japan and put my effort into Christian evangelism there. Japanese have God. We have to teach them the real God. Mr. Teshima is spreading "Genshi Fukuin" -- that's alright but I don't think it is enough. I have several of his books.

Prayers are heard. When my first wife was near death, she recovered by prayers once and died several months later. Also when my present wife was near death when we were in Cleveland, Ohio, I prayed and she miraculously recovered. And there was a member of Berkeley Free Methodist Church who was said to die in 4 hours. I was in the same hospital with Typhoid fever and heard this. A missionary lady, Miss Polk came and prayed for him and she asked me to pray also -- so I did. This person is still alive. Dr. Sato who came from Japan prayed for Mrs. Sakata of Watsonville who was ill -- she is still living. Mrs. Ono of our church had cancer. She had colotomy done. We prayed for her. She is still living and plays the organ for us sometimes. She was our organist for a long time.

The Bible says gather your elders of the church and pray. When Easter comes, I think of my first wife. She believed in resurrection and she asked to be buried so did. She had a deep conviction I am not able to reach the depth of her conviction as yet. We should not belittle other person's faith because everyone's faith is different as their faces are different. We must respect other's faith. I want the hymn 271 in Japanese sung at my funeral because I know I am not perfect. I believe in in the cross of Jesus Christ but I can't believe in the resurrection absolutely. I go to Good Friday services and bring my thoughts to Christ on the Cross but I can't die for my faith.

Q: Do you know Mr. Asano of the Nichi Bei Times?

A: He came to Nichi Bei Times after I quit.

Q: Can I have the young people listen to these tapes?

Can we own the tapes? We would like to translate these tapes into English and use it for books or something.

Is it alright with you?

A: Yes, I will be very pleased.

Q: Will you sign this form? Today is March 10, 1974, will you please write it in for me? Please write your address also. Thank you very much -- May I borrow all these? (photos, books, and etcs.)

A: Yes, you may.